

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1 and 15 have been amended. Claims 2, and 5-8 have been canceled. Claims 13 and 14 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 3, 4, and 9-16 remain pending in the present application, of which claims 1 and 15 are independent.

With appreciation, it is noted that the Office Action indicates (see page 13, item 19) claim 5 as containing allowable subject matter.

Acknowledgement of Priority Document Receipt Requested

A certified copy of the priority document was submitted on November 26, 2003. To date, no official acknowledgement of the USPTO's receipt of the certified copy of the priority document has been noted in the prosecution history. In other words, none of boxes 12.a.1, 12.a.2, 12.a.3 has been checked on the Summary page (form PTOL-326) of Office Action. The undersigned has no reason to believe that this circumstance implies anything other than a minor oversight on the part of the USPTO. Accordingly, official acknowledgement of the USPTO's receipt of the certified copy of the priority document is hereby respectfully requested.

Noted - IDS Considered

The indication (see Examiner-initialed PTO form 1449 mailed with Office Action dated December 5, 2007) that the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) as filed on November 26, 2003 and September 27, 2006 and references listed therein have been considered is noted with appreciation.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-12, and 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Perkins et al., (United States Patent Publication 2004/0156325) in view of Fant et al., (United States Patent Publication 2004/0076151). On the other hand, the Office Action indicates (see page 13, item 19) claim 5 as containing allowable subject matter.

Claims 1 and 15, which are independent claims, are amended to recite the subject matter of claim 5. Claims 3, 4, 9-12 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, and claim 16 depends from claim 15. Therefore, each of the claims 1, 3, 4, 9-12, and 15-16 patentably

distinguishes over the cited references.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.


If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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By: 
J. Randall Beckers
Registration No. 30,358

1201 New York Ave, N.W., 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501